

Volume 1

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THE NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT LIQUID WASTE PROGRAM

The Septic Underground

Shedding light into the on-site septic systems of New Mexico

Property Transfer Evaluations

Prior to the transfer of a property which has an existing on-site liquid waste system the current system owner must have the system inspected and evaluated by a third-party inspector (as described in STEP 1 below) utilizing a department approved form.

HOMEOWNER INFORMATION

STEP 1: Hire a Contractor or Inspector You will need to hire a contractor or inspector who is one of the following: a Liquid Waste Contractor (*who holds an appropriate license by the Constructions Industries Division (CID)*) a Professional Engineer or a NAWT Certified Inspector. The acceptable license classifications for a liquid waste contractor are MM-1, MM-98, MS-1 and MS-3. You may also contact an inspector who is certified by the National Association of Wastewater Transporters (NAWT) and approved by NMED. You can find a list of NAWT certified inspectors at NAWT.org

STEP 2: Provide Information to Contractor to Conduct Permit Search or Conduct the Search Yourself It is important that you or the contractor/inspector have detailed information including all names of original owners, previous owners, current owner and builders; precise system address and locations and all previous addresses; and other important information. This may require you or your contractor/inspector to go to your county building office or title insurance office

STEP 3: You or Contractor Conducts a Thorough Permit Search You or your contractor/inspector will conduct a thorough search of the permit database on the liquid waste website. If a permit was found skip to STEP 5. If a permit was not found, go to STEP 4.

STEP 4: If No Permit is Found, Submit a "Request for Liquid Waste Permit Search" to NMED Please submit the completed form to your local Field Office and allow a minimum of 5 business days for NMED to process these requests. Forms that are not filled out completely will be returned to you or your contractor/inspector, requiring more information. This may require that you make contact with your county building department or title insurance office to gather the necessary information.

NEXT STEP: If a permit was found, follow Step 5 Below; If no permit was found follow Steps 6 and 7 on Page 2 of this publication

If a Liquid Waste Permit was Found

STEP 5: – Have the System Evaluated by a Contractor, Inspector or Installer Specialist The inspector will need to inspect and evaluate your existing septic system to determine whether it is functioning properly, whether it is properly sized for your existing residence and whether it meets all requirements of the Liquid Waste Regulations.



Your inspector will complete an NMED "Onsite Wastewater System Evaluation Form" and submit this to the local NMED Field Office. The department will stamp the document as received and issue a \$50 invoice filing fee and then file the evaluation as an official record. NMED staff will follow up if a modification permit is required to be filed. The Onsite Wastewater System Evaluation Form shall be valid for 180 days from the date of the evaluation.



PERMIT DATABASE

The New Mexico Environment Department has a Liquid Waste Database which has information on permits from the 1970s to 2016. Permits from 2017 to present will be provided on the web page.

You can access the database by going to the New Mexico Environment Department's Liquid Waste website at https://www.env.nm.gov/liquid_waste/find-an-existing-liquid-waste-permit/

DATABASE SEARCH TIPS

- Enter only a few data fields at a time
- Enter only data fields that you are pretty certain about
- Scroll through the options

If a Liquid Waste Permit was NOT Found (Unpermitted Systems)

STEP 6: Your Contractor or Inspector Submits All Required Forms and Documentation to NMED If a permit was not found for your existing liquid waste system your contractor or inspector will need to apply for a **Certificate of Registration** for continued operation of your system. They will need to complete the first page of the **“Unpermitted Onsite Wastewater System Inspection and Evaluation Form”** and submit all of the information listed in the table below to the local Field Office. This information must be submitted to the local Field Office **before** an on-site inspection is scheduled with an NMED Environmentalist or Installer Specialist.

Submittal Requirements for a Certificate of Registration Application

✓	Unpermitted Onsite Wastewater System Inspection and Evaluation Form (first page)
✓	Application for a Liquid Waste Permit or Registration (Owner information, system location on the application must be filled out completely and Section 3 must be signed by the homeowner or the agent acting for the homeowner)
✓	Proof of Lot Ownership (Warranty Deed or Tax ID statement)
✓	Proof of Lot Size and property boundaries (surveyed plat or tax assessors statement)
✓	Site Plan Drawing (clearly drawn, showing all structures, property lines, system components, wells, waterways and setback distances. <i>See Site Plan Submittal Checklist</i>)
✓	Floor Plan Drawing (a sketch clearly identifying all bedrooms in each structure including guest houses and out-buildings)

STEP 7: Contractor or Inspector Prepares for Inspection Once all submittal requirements are met, the NMED Environmentalist will review the application for completeness and they will communicate with the homeowner or their agent to set up an inspection. An Installer Specialist can complete the inspection in some cases. The homeowner or contractor is responsible to have the entire top of the septic tank uncovered along with 2 feet exposing both the inlet and outlet pipes to the tank. The homeowner is also responsible for having the tank pumped by a septage pumper while the NMED Environmentalist or Installer Specialist is present. The NMED Environmentalist or Installer Specialist will inspect the system to de-terminer whether it is functioning properly and whether it meets the Liquid Waste Regulations that were in effect at the time of installation.

Preparing for The Unpermitted Inspection

The fee for an NMED conducted unpermitted system inspection is \$250.

Your contractor or inspector should coordinate an inspection time with an NMED Environmentalist or Installer Specialist & a Septage Pumper

Prior to the scheduled inspection, the entire top of the septic tank shall be fully exposed and 2 feet around the inlet and outlet of the tank must be ex-posed

The tank must not be pumped until the in-spector is on-site

Additional work is required by NMED during the inspection. This includes removing septic tank lids, providing a hose and water for a water accep-tance test for the disposal field, and exposing por-tions of the field to verify its materials and construc-tion. These activities must be performed by a properly licensed contractor.

